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Weekly

Bulletin



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(Continued from last issue.)

INFANT AND MATERNAL WELFARE.

Reference has been made to two important diseases of childhood—diphtheria and poliomyelitis, because it is believed that they constitute two of the most devastating of all the communicable diseases. Whooping cough also exacts a tremendously heavy toll and measles, with its train of serious after-effects is worthy of intensive action. Health departments are not concerned with communicable disease control alone, however, important as such work may be. The child who has had a chance to develop a rugged physique, who has been fortunate enough to have any possible physical defects discovered early in life and corrected, has a far better equipment for withstanding the attacks that communicable disease may make upon him. For this reason, if for no other, health departments are concerned with the general welfare of both infants and mothers—with mothers, because the health of the child really begins in the health of the mother.

Every child has the right to be well born and every existing official agency has the right to do all that may possibly lie within its power to provide every attribute that will contribute to the proper physical development of the child. If such action will help to build up strong bodies and rugged resistance the work in itself is justified.

The California State Board of Health,

under the provisions of state and federal support, is providing prenatal advice to expectant mothers, most of whom live in the rural districts where the necessary facilities for such instruction are lacking. A series of ten letters is sent upon request, one during each month of pregnancy, and the last one during the month following the birth of the child. Many rural physicians, nurses, health centers and clinics are taking advantage of this service, which the state provides. Twenty thousand sets of such letters have been sent out during the three years that this work has been under way. In addition to this, the twenty-five public health nurses whose salaries are paid in part through the provision of state and federal funds, are working in the rural districts, chiefly, where they advise and assist mothers and prospective mothers. The licensing of maternity hospitals and homes is also one of the functions of the board. More than three hundred such hospitals and homes have been inspected and licensed by the state. There are many more to be inspected and this work is being carried on assiduously.

These activities are intended to help the infant to start life under favorable conditions, to provide all that may be possible to give him a good birth and to help him live through the more or less precarious first year of life. To be sure, neither the state nor the nation can go back of the cradle, where infant welfare really begins, but it can do much for the child through the prenatal and antenatal stages of his existence, which is essential in giving him a good start upon his important career as a citizen of this state and nation.



The first year of life is beset with many dangers. There are congenital defects, diseases of the digestive system, chief of which are infantile diarrhea and enteritis, diseases of the respiratory system, chiefly pneumonia, and communicable diseases other than pneumonia; these are the chief causes of death in infants under one year of age. Under congenital causes may be classed congenital debility, malformations, premature birth, venereal diseases and injury at birth. About one-half of all infant deaths in California are due to one of these causes. Infants will continue to die from these congenital causes until such time as the state may be able to direct methods for the control of the growth of population. It is a problem in eugenics, a field in which little or no action is undertaken in California at the present time. Mating of the unfit will, at some time, receive proper attention. It is certain that a definite proportion of infantile deaths can not be prevented so long as those who are mentally and constitutionally unfit to reproduce their kind.

About a thousand California infants die annually of diarrhea and enteritis. The incidence of these diseases is highest during the first month of life but does not make great diminution until after the third month of life. The greatest field for infant life saving lies in the prevention of these diseases of the digestive system. The provision of pure milk and proper feeding accomplishes much in reducing the numbers of deaths from diarrhea. It is here that health officers and public health nurses are doing much to save infant lives. It is here that preventive medicine has one of its greatest opportunities.

It has been said that the infant mortality rate is the most reliable index to the general health condition of any community. Certainly the type of citizenship to be found in any community can best be judged in the efforts made by the community to conserve its child life. Infant mortality rates are higher in the rural districts than in the cities and such rates are higher among the children of foreign-born mothers than among those of the native-born. Our urban districts generally provide extensive or at least adequate facilities for prenatal, postnatal and infant care. It is in the rural districts that such facilities are generally lacking. The state is attempting to assist in the provision of the needed service in those parts of the state where it is lacking. It can not possibly cover the field, but it is able to stimulate considerable action where it is most needed.

The twenty-five nurses, already referred to, organize the work in their respective districts by means of committees appointed by representatives of medical societies, the health officer and lay people. These nurses visit expectant mothers to whom they have been referred by attending physicians. They visit young mothers in their homes giving instructions and demonstrations. They assist in the organization of health centers for prenatal work, mothers' classes and infant welfare organizations. They help to prevent blindness in infants by ascertaining if the eyes of the newly born are treated properly. They demonstrate the technique and value of breast feeding, general care of the infant, bath, ventilation, clothes and sleep, as well as the preparation of artificial foods and dietary, if it is necessary. They attempt to secure competent assistance for the mother in confinement and frequently must lose much sleep, themselves, in sacrificing their own time when emergency demands it.

Children, before entering school, should be made physically fit to receive the expensive education the state provides. Of what avail is it to spend many thousands of dollars to educate a child whose physical defects make him totally unable to receive an education? In order to be physically fit for the first grade a child must be well nourished, he must stand erect, he must have good vision and hear well, his skin must be clear, he must breathe through his nose, his teeth must be sound, his throat must not be diseased and he must have established good elementary health habits. It has been found that at least seventy-five per cent of preschool children suffer from at least one or more of these defects. The early discovery of these defects, and their correction, as well as immunization against both diphtheria and smallpox, are absolutely essential for every child before he enters school. The California State Board of Health at the present time is sponsoring the examination of preschool children in thirty-eight counties of the state. Each of these counties is organized to carry on this important work. From the standpoint of economy, efficiency and human welfare the making physically fit of these children is an indispensable part of our civilized, organized government.

The child who is well born, who receives proper infant care, whose possible physical defects are discovered and corrected early in life, who is immunized against these diseases for which such protection is available, who is safeguarded against



all other communicable diseases, who is properly fed, who is given proper recreation and whose environment is wholesome has received the very best that modern civilization can give him to make him the type of citizen that the world most needs during the uncertain years that are coming.

We Americans are in the van of every other nation in providing for the welfare of our children and in this we show our foresight and our wisdom. The old adage, "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world" is as true today as when it was first spoken many years ago. Children of today must in a few years take their places in the sun. Our responsibility in providing them with every facility to enable them to face their greater responsibilities in the years to come is clear. Make them physically sound; free them from all disabling handicaps; guard them against the insidious attacks of disease; make them red-blooded, sound-bodied, strong, rugged, care-free children of this great American nation and they will be equipped to solve the world problems that they must face in future years.

The healthy know not of their health, but only the sick.—Carlyle.

### County Health Good; Inheritance Tax Low.

Orange County is said to present a peculiar problem for the Inheritance Tax Department of the State Controller's office. A representative of that department was recently in Orange County checking up records and he expressed doubt as to whether he would find any business. "There is great wealth," he said, "but also great health." People in good health do not die and inheritance taxes come only as a result of death. Orange County with its well organized full-time health unit seems to be the gainer and the State seems to be the loser, which only goes to show that the maintenance of community health is a profitable enterprise.

We need fresh, pure air all the time. Sleeping or walking, resting or working, sick or well, our supply of good, fresh, uncooked air should never be curtailed either as to quality or quantity. The trouble is that in most homes, especially steam heated apartments, the air supply is a devitalized "cooked" or "baked" air. In addition to this, it is as a rule over-heated and dry. And this means indoor conditions that make for sickness and disease.—Chicago School of Sanitary Instruction.

### Vaccination Does Not Cause Syphilis.

The Surgeons General of the Army, Navy and Public Health Service have issued a statement recently, signed by each of them, in which the declaration is made that in the accumulated government records of over ten and one-half million people who have been vaccinated against smallpox there is not a single instance of syphilis having been transmitted by smallpox vaccine. They also state that no vaccine can be sold in interstate traffic in the United States unless it receives the stamp of government approval. The facts, as presented, are directly opposed to one of the most commonly used arguments against vaccination.

Health lies in labor, and there is no royal road to it except through toil.—Wendell Phillips.

### MORBIDITY.\*

#### Diphtheria.

107 cases of diphtheria have been reported, as follows: Alameda County 1, Berkeley 2, Oakland 5, Colusa County 1, Contra Costa County 3, Fresno County 2, Kern County 7, Lake County 1, Los Angeles County 8, Glendale 1, Hermosa Beach 1, Long Beach 2, Los Angeles 28, South Pasadena 1, Torrance 2, Signal Hill 1, Merced 1, Napa 1, Anaheim 1, Brea 1, Fullerton 1, Roseville 4, Corona 1, Sacramento County 1, Sacramento 2, Redlands 1, San Diego 1, San Francisco 17, San Joaquin County 1, Stockton 2, San Jose 1, Healdsburg 1, Modesto 1, Turlock 2, Red Bluff 1.

#### Scarlet Fever.

216 cases of scarlet fever have been reported, as follows: Berkeley 9, Oakland 17, Piedmont 1, Chico 1, Calaveras County 2, Contra Costa County 1, Fresno County 1, Fresno 1, Humboldt County 1, Kern County 5, Bakersfield 1, Kings County 1, Los Angeles County 20, Alhambra 5, Beverly Hills 1, Burbank 2, Compton 1, Covina 1, Glendale 1, Huntington Park 1, Long Beach 11, Los Angeles 39, Monrovia 3, Pasadena 2, Pomona 2, San Gabriel 2, Santa Monica 5, South Pasadena 5, Whittier 4, Monterey Park 2, Orange County 1, Brea 1, Huntington Beach 2, Santa Ana 2, Sacramento 3, San Benito County 1, Redlands 1, San Diego County 2, National City 1, San Diego 1, San Francisco 18, San Joaquin County 1, Stockton 2, San Mateo 3, Santa Clara County 2, Gilroy 1, Mountain View 3, Palo Alto 1, San Jose 9, Santa Cruz 1, Stanislaus County 2, Turlock 1, Tehama County 2, Corning 2, Red Bluff 1, Tulare County 2, Lindsay 1, Tuolumne County 1.

#### Measles.

3168 cases of measles have been reported, as follows: Alameda County 2, Alameda 23, Berkeley 30, Oakland 97, Piedmont 4, San Leandro 1, Contra Costa County 5, El Dorado County 1, Fresno County 29, Fresno 11, Eureka 5, Kern County 50, Bakersfield 5, Taft 1, Kings County 5, Hanford 6, Lemoore 8, Lake County 1, Los Angeles County 235, Alhambra 40, Arcadia 21, Beverly Hills 4,

\* From reports received on April 11 and 12 for week ending April 9.



Burbank 4, Compton 31, Covina 1, El Monte 18, El Segundo 23, Glendale 148, Glendora 7, Hermosa Beach 5, Huntington Park 4, Long Beach 100, Los Angeles 858, Manhattan Beach 29, Monrovia 69, Montebello 1, Pasadena 100, Pomona 43, Redondo Beach 48, San Gabriel 6, Santa Monica 2, Sierra Madre 7, South Pasadena 28, Whittier 1, Lynwood 1, South Gate 7, Monterey Park 10, Maywood 3, Hawthorne 9, Madera County 3, Madera 3, Mill Valley 1, San Rafael 6, Merced County 4, Monterey County 55, King City 15, Monterey 2, Grass Valley 1, Orange County 41, Anaheim 15, Brea 4, Fullerton 4, Orange 6, Santa Ana 59, Seal Beach 2, La Habra 16, Corona 17, Sacramento County 1, Sacramento 15, Ontario 4, San Diego County 38, Chula Vista 20, Coronado 12, National City 8, Oceanside 13, San Diego 356, San Francisco 135, San Joaquin County 17, Manteca 1, Stockton 7, San Luis Obispo County 4, Paso Robles 3, Redwood City 13, San Bruno 1, San Mateo 2, Santa Clara County 16, Gilroy 1, Los Gatos 18, Mountain View 7, Palo Alto 2, San Jose 11, Watsonville 3, Vacaville 1, Stanislaus County 2, Modesto 3, Newman 1, Trinity County 2, Tulare County 4, Dinuba 4, Lindsay 4, Tuolumne County 11, Sonoma 20, Oxnard 1, Yolo County 4, Woodland 2.

#### Smallpox.

41 cases of smallpox have been reported, as follows: Oakland 12, Los Angeles County 1, Burbank 1, Sausalito 3, Modoc County 4, Corona 6, Sacramento 5, San Francisco 1,

Mountain View 5, Sunnyvale 1, Stanislaus County 1, Yolo County 1.

#### Typhoid Fever.

4 cases of typhoid fever have been reported, as follows: San Diego County 1, San Francisco 1, Los Angeles 2.

#### Whooping Cough.

190 cases of whooping cough have been reported, as follows: Alameda 7, Albany 1, Berkeley 23, Oakland 17, Piedmont 2, Colusa 4, Contra Costa County 1, Fresno County 5, Fresno 3, Humboldt County 2, Hanford 3, Los Angeles County 16, Alhambra 2, Glendale 10, Huntington Park 3, Long Beach 19, Los Angeles 22, Monrovia 1, Redondo Beach 1, South Pasadena 1, Los Banos 1, Santa Ana 2, Coronado 2, San Diego 7, San Francisco 22, Lodi 1, Stockton 1, San Luis Obispo County 8, Solano County 2, Tulare County 1.

#### Meningitis (Epidemic).

8 cases of epidemic meningitis have been reported, as follows: Contra Costa County 1, Kern County 1, Fort Bragg 1, Sacramento County 4, San Francisco 1.

#### Poliomyelitis.

San Francisco reported one case of poliomyelitis.

#### Encephalitis (Epidemic).

Los Angeles reported one case of epidemic encephalitis.

### COMMUNICABLE DISEASE REPORTS.

Disease	1927				1926			
	Week ending			Reports for week ending Apr. 9 received by Apr. 12	Week ending			Reports for week ending Apr. 10 received by Apr. 13
	Mar. 19	Mar. 26	Apr. 2		Mar. 20	Mar. 27	Apr. 3	
Anthrax	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Botulism	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chickenpox	647	588	621	575	427	375	280	245
Diphtheria	176	134	161	107	151	132	127	99
Dysentery (Bacillary)	1	0	1	0	2	0	5	1
Encephalitis (Epidemic)	0	1	2	1	2	2	3	0
Gonococcus Infection	83	80	116	78	73	111	350	86
Influenza	87	75	119	61	131	36	31	30
Jaundice (Epidemic)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leprosy	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
Malaria	0	0	1	1	0	1	2	0
Measles	3328	3559	3328	3168	170	193	135	174
Meningitis (Epidemic)	6	4	9	8	4	4	5	2
Mumps	283	340	364	297	366	364	398	211
Paratyphoid Fever	1	4	0	0	0	0	2	0
Pneumonia (Lobar)	60	158	124	60	58	52	99	55
Poliomyelitis	1	2	3	1	6	1	1	1
Rabies (Animal)	7	5	7	6	7	13	1	11
Rabies (Human)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Rocky Mt. Spotted Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scarlet Fever	220	250	232	216	181	151	152	85
Smallpox	26	20	32	41	105	126	160	75
Syphilis	98	111	70	160	93	106	231	181
Tetanus	0	3	1	0	1	1	3	0
Trachoma	3	1	2	3	1	56	2	1
Trichinosis	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Tuberculosis	189	223	209	216	169	237	254	210
Typhoid Fever	22	11	12	4	12	6	12	12
Typhus Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Whooping Cough	189	231	204	190	87	56	88	56
Totals	5430	5802	5619	5193	2047	2026	2341	1536